

When Senior Airman Lee Rogers looks in the mirror, he sees someone who's fulfilling two destinies - one with his country and another with God.

Airman makes dual commitment to God and country

By Staff Sgt. Pamela Smith
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Senior Airman Lee Rogers has traveled the world, visiting places like Italy, Germany, Hungary and Thailand. Yet, none of those places excite him as much as seeing someone give their life to Christ.

Rogers, a still photographer assigned to the 1st Combat Camera Squadron during the week, is a minister at the Abundant Life Tabernacle in downtown Charleston on weekends.

"I didn't decide to become a minister," Rogers said. "It was more of a revelation."

"In this world, I've learned there is more work to be done than just nine-to-five," he said.

The seven-year Air Force veteran has been studying the ministry since 1995.

"When I joined the Air Force, I knew very little about people," Rogers said. "The Air Force has taught me how to deal with people, how to be organized and how to be disciplined."

These are all the things he needs to be a successful minister, he said.

Though his initial plans were to enroll in the Airman Education and Commissioning Program, he changed his mind because Rogers doesn't have a desire to be a military chaplain. He said being enlisted has pointed him in the right direction toward his goal of being the pastor at his own church someday. "I think in order to be a good leader, you have to be a good follower."

Rogers doesn't feel being in the military conflicts with his desire to serve God. "The military has a biblical background," he said. "The first armies were established by God, to protect his religious kingdoms and land."

Rogers said his job as a military photographer was part of God's plan for him. "Often, God gives you a job to prepare you for your work."

The basic lessons you learn in the military run parallel to lessons he's learned from the Bible - integrity, honesty, timeliness and respects for your superiors and peers, he said.

Rev. Brian Moore, Senior Pastor at Abundant Life, said that Rogers' military background is a benefit to his church and its members.

"We have a strong military presence in our church because of where we are," he said. "Those constituents will listen to someone who has walked in their shoes and knows challenges they face."

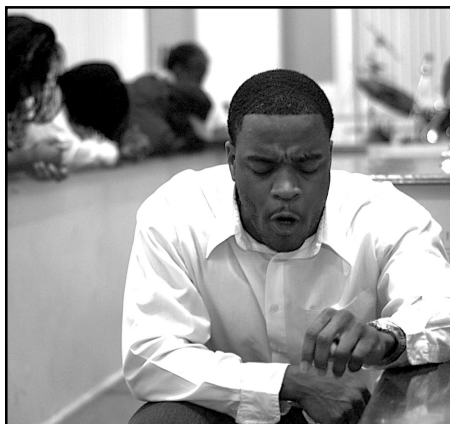
The things Rogers loves about the Air Force are the same things he loves about being a minister, he said. "I love helping people and being there for them."

"God needs to reach everyone," Rogers said, "the homeless, the Congressmen and us, the military members."

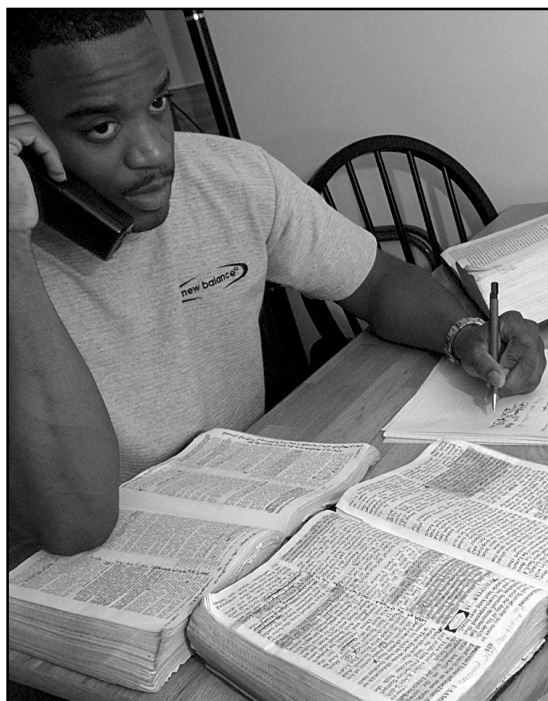


(above) Rogers, with Senior Airman Stan Parker, said the best part of both of his jobs is working with people.

Rogers sees a "window of opportunity" ahead of him in both his career in the Air Force and his future as a minister.



Rogers leads members of the Abundant Life Tabernacle (background) in prayer.



Rogers, talking with his mom on the phone, spends a lot of his spare time reading and studying the scriptures.

